

## KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS OFFENDER NEWSLETTER

August 2012

Volume 2, Issue 8



### Inside this issue:

Tips For Incarcerated Parents	1
Most Frequently Asked Questions	3
"New Direction" update	3
Governor's Reentry Steering Committee	4
Louisville Metro Reentry Task Force	6
Singing for Democracy	8
Why Do I Need Identification	9

### Special points of interest:

- Governor's Reentry Task Force Steering Committee identifies the three major barriers for offenders being released.

# Homeward Bound

## TIPS FOR INCARCERATED PARENTS

The New Jersey Department of Corrections, Divisions of Programs and Community Services Office of Transitional services has written a guide for parents when they go to prison. Over the next few months we will be providing sections of this guide in the reentry newsletters.

Information provided from "What about Me?"

*Many of the men and women currently incarcerated are parents of children under the age of 18. It is estimated that 1.7 million children have a father in prison and 200,000 children have a mother in prison in the United States. Approximately ten million, or one in eight children, have had an incarcerated parent at some point of their lives. The link between generations is so strong, that half of all juveniles that are in custody had a father, mother, or other close relative who has been in jail or prison.*

*Little is known about what happens to children when their parents are incarcerated. Children of offenders have basic needs: a safe place to live and people to care for them in their parents' absence, food, clothing, and medical care. Beyond these basic needs, children have many less tangible needs. When parents are arrested, or placed in jail or prison, their children are often scared, confused, and upset. Often people don't talk about having a family member in prison because it is very personal information. Children, though, may have a lot of questions they need answers to.*

*Children need to be told the truth about their parents' situation. They need contact with their other parent or a buddies parents: to have that relationship recognized and valued even under these circumstances. They need to be treated with respect, offered opportunity, and recognized as having potential.*

*Continued on page 2...*

## Tips for incarcerated parents continued from page 1

*When children are not in contact with their parent, it is a breeding ground for idealization, and when the parent is a big time criminal, they can turn them into legends.*

### **Why should this information be of interest to you?**

*Research shows that inmates who stay in touch with their families are more likely to have a smoother transition back into society when released.*

*Unless determined by a family court judge, serving time in prison does not mean that you have lost your right to make decisions about the care of your children or that your relationships with your children has become less important. Parenting from prison isn't easy. You will probably get frustrated and feel overwhelmed at times. Some family relationships may be strained. Sometimes it may feel like it is impossible to stay in touch with your children. All of these challenges are real, and must be overcome. It will require patience, creativity, and persistence on your part. It is possible to play an active role in your children's lives. The major concerns for most incarcerated parents are:*

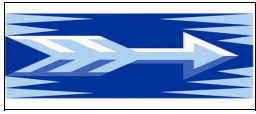
- 1. Dealing with the emotions of being separated from their children*
- 2. Making decisions regarding the placement and care of their children*
- 3. Maintaining contact with their children during incarceration*
- 4. Reuniting with their children once they are released from prison*

In the next several editions of the newsletter, we will be providing tips from this guide on the following:

1. Understanding how your incarceration impacts your children;
2. How to establish a working relationship with the person who is taking care of your children;
3. What you can do to make the most of the situation.

Our next edition will discuss "Common Stress Points" for your children and family during the arrest, pre-trial, trial, sentencing phase and the initial incarceration process.





## MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**QUESTION: What is the Risk/needs assessment (RNA) information used for?**

**ANSWER:** RNA information is primarily used today by the supervising agency in the development of an effective plan for the offender. The community supervision and treatment plan is designed to target the offender's most important risk factors. Use of RNA information also allows the supervising officer to focus on factors in his or her personal interactions with the individual.

**QUESTION: Is RNA information also helpful to the court in the sentencing process?**

**ANSWER:** Yes. Increasingly courts are finding that the availability of accurate RNA information at sentencing allows judges to ensure that the special conditions of probation ordered by the court with respect to the individual's level of supervision, treatment, monitoring, and control are properly designed to address the offender's specific and most important risk factors. Those special conditions establish the terms and conditions for the offender's supervision, and thus provide appropriate direction and authority to the supervising officer. Special conditions that do not address the individual offender's most important risk factors are ineffective. Risk factors can also change over time; conditions must therefore also provide maximum flexibility to the supervising officer.

## "NEW DIRECTION" UPDATE

"New Direction" is presently being introduced in all institutions across Kentucky. The offender workbooks are being printed and the classes have started.

In an effort to provide a beginning to address the barriers identified by the Governor's Reentry Task Force Steering Committee, specific modules will address some of the identified areas:

**Housing Module # 4** describes the types of available housing, where to look for housing, what is affordable for your budget and the Kentucky laws on housing.

**Health Module # 10** talks about the importance of health, managing stress, diet, exercise, disease, and a video, "How Healthy Can You Go," that provides the basic tools for care after release from incarceration.

**Employment Module # 6** provides information on job seeking and resources, résumés, interview preparation, job applications and mock job interviews.

## **Recommendations by the Governor's Reentry Task Force Steering Committee**

During the past several months the Governor's Reentry Task Force Steering Committee has examined barriers the offender population face upon release from incarceration. Listed below are the three main barriers and a category of "Other Needs" the Committee identified and may be considered for legislative action.

### **HOUSING**

- Remove housing barriers to enable offenders access to affordable housing options, halfway house facilities and other supportive placements;
- Create tax incentives for those who provide housing to ex-offenders to encourage increased access to affordable housing, to include incentives/access to supportive community placement, nursing care facilities and personal care homes;

### **TREATMENT**

- Reinvest savings in future fiscal years for treatment services;
- Mandate that community substance abuse treatment services be included in Medicaid (Public) benefits;
- Create an intensive case management system for justice involved persons with mental illness;
- Ensure adequate Community Treatment Services;
- Review child support obligations (including the criminal process of) during incarceration and post –incarceration treatment to consider implementation of feasible child support payment during treatment/incarceration;

### **EMPLOYMENT**

- Create simplified process with reduced cost for expungement of felony and misdemeanor offenses as allowed by law;
- Remove/modify permanent employment restrictions based solely on felon status upon reentry;
- Promote federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit that provides a tax credit for employers that hire ex-offenders;
- Create a state Work Opportunity Tax Credit mirroring the federal tax credit specifically for ex-offenders;
- Create and fund prerelease and community-based life skills training for returning offenders to be provided by volunteers;

Continued on page 5

Recommendations continued from page 4...

**OTHER NEEDS**

- A) Provide automatic restoration of voting rights for ex-felons
- B) Expand Department of Public Advocacy's (DPA) Social Worker Program
- C) Eliminate loss of public assistance and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program assistance

The Governor's Reentry Task Force Steering Committee is comprised of representative from several state cabinets, private citizens and community representatives. The steering committee reports to the Executive committee of the Governor's Reentry Task Force.

**CARDINAL CLINIC IROQUOIS**

Affordable Care Clinic run by the University of Louisville  
School of Medicine students and physicians.

Affordable Care Clinic  
4100 Taylor Blvd.  
Louisville, KY

6:00—8:00 PM on Mondays

\$10.00 per patient, per visit (insurance not necessary).

For more information call 502-882-0224 or email  
[cardinalcliniciroquois@gmail.com](mailto:cardinalcliniciroquois@gmail.com)



*By Sylvia Bennett*

*Senior Social Worker*

*Louisville Metro Department of Corrections*

The Louisville Metro Reentry Task Force (LMRTF) is on the move as it receives leadership from Kim Potter Blair, Deputy Commissioner of Kentucky Department of Corrections and Mark Bolton, Director of Louisville Metro Department of Corrections.

LMRTF started 2012 with a bang focusing on strategic planning, tackling topics such as: LS/CMI, role of Corrections Directors in reentry, reducing recidivism, setting recidivism reduction goals and realizing those targets. The objective continues to promote information sharing while moving to a focused agenda and creating a forum for system problem solving on emerging needs or issues related to reentry.

The LMRTF was honored to have Dr. Rick Underwood facilitate strategic planning sessions with the following topics: Weakness of the task force, Opportunities of the task force, and Threats that might hinder the task force just to name a few. The team shared ideas, thoughts and opinions to increase the magnitude of the team and its mission.

LMRTF continues to invite organizations to share information about the services they provide.

Program Director, Ms. BJ Mayhew of Big Brother Big Sisters of Kentuckiana provided an overview of the Big Brother Big Sister Program. She stated "This organization provides ongoing support and supervision to the Big, Little and the Little's Family, as well as training and guidance to help to insure that the match is working for everyone involved".

Kentucky Department of Corrections Program Administrator, Cheryl Million also presented a wealth of information on the New Direction Program. This program has replaced the Prison To The Streets program. The New Direction Program is designed to be a comprehensive approach to addressing the barriers offenders face when released from incarceration.

Daniel Fountain, Assistant Supervisor for Probation and Parole facilitated the ex-offender panel which discussed challenges and or barriers that offenders experience after being released from prison or jail. The team also received information from Kentucky Department of Corrections Reentry Branch Manager, Brigid Adams as she provided a PowerPoint presentation concerning the Level of Service/ Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI). Ms. Adams shared valuable information about the case management plan that has been implemented in the DOC.

Continued on page 7



Continued from page 6



Without hesitation LMRTF was diligent to discuss, revise, and implemented the new mission statement which states: *"The Louisville Metro Reentry Task Force is the collaborating organization serving as the resource for information for all local offender reentry strategies promoting evidence-based programs. We seek funding opportunities, while promoting public safety and increasing public awareness. We educate all about the need for offender reentry programs as well as advocating for victim's rights."*

The Louisville Metro Reentry Task Force has made great strides and continues to work at collaborating, assisting, enlightening all stakeholders about the services that each member provides collectively as a team and independently as an organization. Monthly for approximately 2 hours the LMRTF members come together to network, discuss new projects, obstacles, updates, legislation, and solutions. The LMRTF continues to make a difference within the Louisville Metro Community and surrounding counties.

If you have information you would like to see provided in your newsletter, please contact the below staff members:

Homeward Bound Contact Information:

Brigid Adams

[brigid.adams@ky.gov](mailto:brigid.adams@ky.gov)

Cheryl Million

[cheryla.million@ky.gov](mailto:cheryla.million@ky.gov)

Mavis McCowan

[mavis.mccowan2@ky.gov](mailto:mavis.mccowan2@ky.gov)

Melissa Moore

[melissaj.moore@ky.gov](mailto:melissaj.moore@ky.gov)

Tanya Stevens

[tanyar.stevens@ky.gov](mailto:tanyar.stevens@ky.gov)

Or write to us at 275 East Main Street, P. O. Box 2400,  
Frankfort, KY 40602

# **Gospel Fest:**

## ***Singing For Democracy!***

**Support the Right to Vote for formerly-incarcerated people**

**Tuesday, August 21 at 6:00 p.m.**

**Shiloh Baptist Church**

**FREE AND OPEN TO ALL**

***Featuring great church choirs, soloists, speakers, and praise dancers from Lexington.***

Kentucky is **one of the most difficult** states for a former felon to get their voting rights back. **243,842** Kentuckians can't vote because of these laws – **including 1 in 5 voting age African Americans.**

We think that after someone has served their time, they should be given back their right to vote. That's the fair thing to do, and it makes Kentucky's democracy stronger.

**Sponsored By:** WIA-"Steppin' To A New Beat" Re-entry Program, and Kentuckians For The Commonwealth.

**Supported By:** Lexington's Knight Hawks, Shiloh Baptist, Bethsaida Baptist, Total Grace Missionary Baptist, Antioch Baptist, and New Birth Church of Christ Christian Ministries, and Immanuel Missionary Baptist

**Contact info: Tayna Fogle 859-699-8073 or 859 425.2192**

**[tfogle@bgadd.org](mailto:tfogle@bgadd.org); [www.kftc.org/votingrights](http://www.kftc.org/votingrights)**